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ABSTRACT

This collection of five essays examines the ways in which history, as a discipline, currently reflects ongoing scholarship on gender, race, ethnicity, social class, and sexual orientation. In "Rethinking History," Carol Ruth Berkin reviews the incorporation of social history into elementary, secondary, and postsecondary textbooks. In "History--Writing from the Margins," Martha C. Howell examines the effects of social history on the profession and the interdisciplinary nature of much of the scholarship on gender, race, ethnicity, and social class. In "Puerto Rican Women's Historiography and the Inclusive Curriculum," Altagracia Ortiz traces the development of Puerto Rican women's history over the last several decades and notes the lack of inclusion of Puerto Rican history into the curriculum. In "American Social History," Myra B. Young Armstead argues that the study of issues surrounding gender, race, ethnicity, and social class have directly challenged conventional historical wisdom and augmented historians' understanding of the past. In "Measuring Impact," Judith P. Zinsser argues that while the field of women's history has grown exponentially over the last several decades, women's experiences continue to be subsumed under men's history or fall prey to old denigrating prejudices. Most essays contain references. (MDM)

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HISTORY

CUNY Panel: Rethinking the Discipline

WOMEN in the CURRICULUM

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Women in the Curriculum

HISTORY

CUNY Panel:

Rethinking the Disciplines

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PREFACE

In the fall of 1992 the SEMINAR ON SCHOLARSHIP AND THE CURRICULUM: THE STUDY OF GENDER, RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CLASS, under the aegis of the **City University of New York Academy for the Humanities and the Sciences**, and generously funded by the Ford Foundation, undertook a series of meetings devoted to "Rethinking the Disciplines." The Academy Seminar had already spent four years examining ways in which the study of gender, race, ethnicity, and class has slowly been transforming the curriculum of the university. Panels had explored women's studies, ethnic studies, area studies, interdisciplinary studies, pedagogical issues, and teaching about such topics as AIDS. The Academy Seminar draws upon faculty at CUNY who are members of the CUNY Academy, upon those interested in these specific issues and upon those who have themselves taken part in one of the several curriculum transformation projects within CUNY beginning in the 1980s.*

* Two at Hunter College beginning 1983 among those teaching introductory courses and in 1985 among faculty in the professional schools; two sponsored by the Center for the Study of Women and Society with Ford Foundation grants for the Community Colleges and for Integrating Materials on Women of Color into the Senior Colleges; four semester-long seminars funded by the New York State Department of Education's Vocational Education Program for technical and vocational education faculty within the University; and six year-long seminars organized by the Office of Academic Affairs of the University for Balancing the Curriculum for Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Class.

It was timely, therefore, that in its fifth year the Academy Seminar should ask directly how much the new theory and curriculum changes that have been identified over the years have actually affected the pursuit of our disciplines. The four areas targeted—Literature, History, Sociology, and Biology—represent disciplines in which a great deal of new "theory" now exists, new journals have proliferated, and considerable work has been done under many aegises to identify, explicate, and disseminate the transformed perspectives that have been formulated. There is no lack of materials now, no absence of theoretical frameworks, no question of the level of sophistication and argumentation, and no dearth of pedagogical analyses demonstrating the importance of these new methodological approaches, this new knowledge base.

For HISTORY, each panelist was asked to consider the issues from a set of questions framed to bring forward what is happening from her perspective in the discipline. These questions probe the ways history currently reflects the ongoing scholarship on gender, race, ethnicity, and class: have there been any shifts in the ways research is taught to graduate students in this field, for example, or are the questions asked by the discipline in any way different? If there have been changes, have they begun to show up in introductory textbooks?

More fundamentally, do our panelists believe that there have been efforts to reconceptualize the discipline? If on the other hand, panelists think disciplinary changes have been minor, do they care to comment on why—in the light of so much new scholarship on gender, race, ethnicity, and class, changes remain marginal to the practice of the discipline?

Has our new wealth of knowledge affected our teaching? Has it accomplished any significant paradigm shifts in traditional disciplines?

Dorothy O. Helly

Series Editor

November 30, 1992

Towson University, Baltimore, MD

HISTORY

Rethinking History

Carol Ruth Berkin

It is always a problem to assess the impact of new scholarship upon a social science or humanities discipline. In part, the problem lies in the fact that few of these disciplines are so centralized—ideologically, methodologically, or even in terms of authority hierarchy—that any single rejection or acceptance of a new approach (no matter how dramatic) can be pointed to as definitive. My own discipline—history—is so fragmented, both in terms of methods and interpretive paradigms, and it is so divided and subdivided along axes of chronology, national boundaries, areas such as politics, economics, and so on, with each segment boasting its own journals, conferences, and figures of authority, that new approaches do not so much challenge or reshape the discipline all at once; rather they challenge or reshape small commonwealths within it. This means that interpretative and methodological changes and refinement come unevenly, and that a critical mass of scholarship develops at a different pace on each topic. And, because historians are, I believe, notoriously individualistic about their work, scholars developing new approaches have little in the way of strategic planning or even cooperative enterprise focused on developing a literature that illustrates and exemplifies the strengths of that approach. Finally, while

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there is certainly a literature that focuses on race, gender, class, or ethnicity—and any combination thereof—there is no consensus among its practitioners on the meaning of these terms or on the analytic models that most effectively deploy them. Nor is there any consensus on the ways in which these categories of analysis intersect or stand in tension with one another.

And yet . . . one would have had to be buried in the stacks of a library for the past two decades not to believe that the scholarship on gender/*et al.* has had a dynamic impact on the discipline of history. Helter-skelter, the new scholarship has forced dialogue (and heated argument) on every eternal verity of the field: on chronology, on periodization, on the hierarchy of events and issues we study, and on the critical actors in the history we are analyzing and reconstructing.

I do not mean to disparage these signs of success. But, I do not think that they cover all that the organizers of this seminar had in mind when they asked "have the disciplines changed as result of the scholarship on gender, race, ethnicity, and class." For these changes reflect the impact of gender/class and such as topics rather than categories of analysis. Only if we look at them as a classification of subject matter—women, African Americans, Asian Americans, working class movements or labor organizing, or the Italian-American immigrants to the United States—can we see a shift in the discipline—a shift is no small thing; but it is a preliminary step rather than a revolution.

It is probably salutary to review that "preliminary step." Over the past two decades, an extensive literature on most of these topics has found its way into journals, anthologies, conference panels, and monographic work. It has become part of the body of knowledge historians can and are expected to draw upon. Once it reaches a critical

mass, any concentrated literature becomes part of the resource pool; others may refuse to use it, but they have to expect to be called upon to defend their selection process if they are to maintain their credentials. They cannot claim ignorance of its existence. In the fields of women's history or African-American history, for example, this claim is gone. All scholars and teachers have been willing to revise their hierarchies of importance when they produce their narration of the past. They can produce reading lists and monographs of shockingly limited scope. But even these traditionalists accept that they have selected categories and topics out of a far broader range of options than they once acknowledged—that is, they concede a decision to exclude and include, where once they were comfortably oblivious to the existence of other categories or topics. It is now a conscious choice to write about white men elected to national office rather than about women's suffrage; it cannot appear to scholar or reader to be the "natural" focus of a historical study. In the jargon of the day, we have problematized the issue.

Not even the most recalcitrant traditionalists can claim ignorance when confronted by a student who wishes to do a dissertation on the free black communities of antebellum Pennsylvania, or female missionary societies, or the role of the Iroquois in the Seven Years' War. They can express disdain; they can counsel against the topic; they can be obstructionists; but they cannot react with curious surprise or feigned innocence of such a topic. They will, in all likelihood, send the student down the hall to the department member who "does that sort of thing"—but there is a hall, and there is a department member at the other end of it who does indeed "do that thing." It is a significant step that the defensive shoe is on the other foot these days; I have not been asked in many years why I write women's history but I suspect some of my colleagues have been asked why they don't.

The arrival of these once marginal fields in American history was driven home to me graphically when I went to the first meeting of the Organization of American Historians (OAH) Program Committee for 1994. As many of you know, the OAH is the largest mainstream organization representing our field. Who had been gathered to design the program? My colleagues on this committee include a scholar of white working history, a scholar of radical movements, a noted women's historian, an African American whose field is slavery, and a Hispanic scholar. The remaining member bears the burden of representing all mainstream history. The program we outlined at our first meeting took as its theme the integration of social history and political history through the study of popular movements. I can also point to the fact that books on slavery, freedmen, and women's experiences, on midwives, and on Native American cultures of the Southwest have all been the recipient in recent years of the most established of professional prizes in our field—the Bancroft, the Dunning, the Beveridge, and the Pulitzer to name only four.

The measure of how embedded these topics are can be found in a review of textbooks, something about which I know perhaps too much. In the course of the last fifteen years, for reasons of exigency and principle, I have written an elementary school U.S. history text, an eighth-grade text, two versions of what is the best-selling eleventh-grade text, and am now completing a college text. For our purposes, I think it might be best to focus on the high school and college textbooks. And, with your indulgence, I will talk about my own experiences in this genre, assuming that you can make the necessary corrections for bias or degree of typicality as we proceed.

As a genre, of course, textbooks have their own protocols and rubrics; they are designed to conform to prevailing notions of education, both secondary and undergraduate,

and to meet market demands. They are not vanguard, but rearguard actions by the profession, and I do not think that we can make them bear the brunt of our criticism. Yet, insofar as they do reflect the main inclinations and biases of the discipline, they can be illuminating. The original eleventh-grade text, called *Land of Promise*, fell softly into the category of "progress" I denoted above; it included, as topics of discussion and narration, women, American Indians, African Americans, and the various social classes, from the poor to the elites. It covered, as topics, women's role in the American Revolution, changing definitions of womanhood after the Revolution, family structure in early America, black women's lives in slavery, the role of women in reform movements, the rise of the suffrage movement, the entrance of women into the paid labor force, and ongoing issues regarding women's equality and women's rights in the twentieth century. It included special features on women and its illustrations were rich with women's faces and activities. The same was true of African-American experiences, and so on. In short, it was inclusive of these groups, and attentive to what we have called, in our topologies of women's or black history, "contribution history." It was, without question, viewed as the most "radical" of textbooks in the 1980s—condemned as communist and anti-American by the leading watchdogs of American patriotism-through-education, the Gablers. However, it eventually captured 85 percent of the school districts of Texas and was the text of choice in many states and regions we in New York might (rather provincially) refuse to categorize as vanguard, or liberal, or even in the twentieth century. Its success, I think, points to the general willingness to use an inclusive text and to allow for the teaching a richer history.

In its second incarnation, significantly renamed *American Voices*, the book became more aggressively a social history text—tracing the role of women, racial and ethnic groups, and nonelites in shaping critical events, and

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the impact of those events upon a multicultural, multiracial, and engendered nation. It incorporated the perspective of many of the most recent social history monographs. And it was conscious of the contingency of historical development—and to a great degree it chose to let men and women speak in their own voices. It too was roundly —and for me, reassuringly—condemned by the right wing lobbyists at the Texas and at other state abortion hearings. It too has been embraced by teachers and state boards willing, and sometimes eager, to teach a more inclusive American history.

The college text, written with three colleagues, is an ambitious effort to blend political and social narratives. It falls within a "tradition" now at least a decade old of texts that incorporate the scholarship on gender/race/class as topics, and that reperiodize and reinterpret the American past as an inclusive one. In this case, the fact that it is part of a tradition—acknowledged by publishing company editors and confirmed by outside reviewers—is the critical point to be made.

However, before we rejoice, let me remind you that these signs of success as well as others—such as the number of Ph.D. students at the Graduate Center who are now minoring in women's history, for example—are the success of topics inquiry not modes of analysis. When it comes to the harder question: has gender, class, race or ethnicity become accepted as a critical variable in our understanding of any historical moment or movement, the answer is far less positive. Of course, the task is far more ambitious as well. My own reading is that American historians still silently translate gender into "what did women do," race into "social mobility issues and labor union history," and ethnicity into "immigrant history." These translations bear witness to a "sensitizing" to the existence of women, Afri-

can Americans, Indians, non-Anglo cultures, and the working class. Yet they do not bear witness to a sea change in the questions asked about social relations, about the nexus of politics and economics, or about the historical construction of race or gender or class. The reconfiguration of paradigms has progressed little in the field of American history, and scholars who wish to employ gender as an analytic variable, for instance, find themselves having to introduce their work with a description, explanation and defense—with a glossary of terms and a restatement of theory. Getting race and gender into the interpretative framework, not simply getting blacks and women into the text, is a challenge still ahead.

At the risk of sounding too tolerant, I want to say that I think these inclinations to evade or avoid the reconceptualization of the dynamic of history along multiple axes of race, gender, class, and others such as region, and life cycle are overdetermined: they are not simply a matter of racism, sexism, or classism. They are the legacies of a discipline that is not self-consciously theoretical and of one that can too easily transform the complexity of social relations into multiple accounts of discrete, parallel development. If we are to change what is taught, we need to work on these habits of the mind.

We need a strategy for educating our colleagues and for improving our own work and refining our goals. Both external and internal change need to be pushed at the same time. Scholars who wish to employ a paradigm constructed upon the axes of race, class, and gender must work *together* to insure that these primary axes are not isolated from one another but brought into dynamic tension. One cannot stand without the others; we cannot isolate gender relations from class relations without diminishing the power of the paradigm. Second, we must work on many levels at

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once in our own work, posing questions about gender relations, about the social construction of gender, about the tensions produced by our subjects' multiple identities as men or women, black or white, elite or working class, old or young, even as we give concrete form to these issues in the lives of particular women or men who lived at particular moments in time. We are woefully short of books or articles that manage to integrate and illustrate these goals well. Simultaneously, we must press our colleagues to go further than the inclusion phase, arguing for a dynamic, interactive, relational model rather than a composite picture that simply overlays separate, parallel histories. We will have varying degrees of success; but we will hone our own skills as we wage this battle—and that is no small thing.

That the burden falls on us, to perfect and to persuade, is a circumstance to resent, a challenge to wish away, tiring, aggravating reality faced by every group that wants to reform or radicalize the world in which they live. Speaking personally, I will add that, over the past fifteen years, I have alternatively felt energized and demoralized, I have frequently felt confused, lost the thread of my own argument with the profession, wandered down paths that led to dead ends conceptually and interpretatively, felt woefully inadequate to the task, been mislead by grandiose notions of victory and morose notions of hopelessness. I offer this thumbnail confessional because I would not want younger scholars and teachers to think that the disciplines have been "rethought" and there is nothing left for them to do; nor do I want them to enter into the fray with romantic notions about the task ahead.

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History—Writing from the Margins

Martha C. Howell

Among the several questions put to us on the History panel, I want to focus on one: how in the last twenty years, the discipline of history has been affected by the new scholarship on gender, race, ethnicity, and class. While I want to argue that it has been greatly affected, I also want to comment on why it is not at all certain that the discipline as a whole will be transformed at its center or even that our particular enterprise of rewriting history or writing new versions of history will prosper. And I want to propose that it will flourish only if we maintain certain interdisciplinary spaces and pursue certain conversations outside or across our discipline. I want to make my argument by way of a bit of history and historiography.

When I began graduate school almost twenty years ago, a paradigm shift was already underway in history, because "class" was providing both a new category of analysis and a point of entry into the profession for non-whites, non-elites, and non-males. Energetic Marxist and neo-Marxist schools of historical writing already existed but we also had a new, not explicitly Marxist genre of history, then called the "new social history." And it had its own, more radical subgenre where what was called "history from below" was being written.

So back then, in 1973, the effects of "class" were being felt, at least in my own field of early modern European history. Although there was and continues to be resistance to this kind of history—or at least constant grumbling, particularly from some British historians who like their kings and queens firmly in place, and some Germans who like

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politics (but not politics, if you will) in their history—there is no doubt that social history, as loosely defined, has transformed the discipline. While many of our colleagues still write biographies of statesmen, chronicle the maneuvers of warriors or diplomats, or painstakingly date manuscripts, they do not control the field anymore, and a great many of them are perfectly willing to take account of social history in writing their own narratives. And, it is even more telling of social history's triumph that the group of historians taking daily life and ordinary people, economic processes, or social structure itself as the "stuff" of history includes some of the most decorated historians of the last twenty years—Lawrence Stone, George Rudé, Philippe Ariès, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Christopher Hill.[1] But social history of this kind is not, of course, what we mean when we ask how the new scholarship on class, race, ethnicity, and gender has changed the discipline. Nevertheless, I think it is useful to begin here because it was a beginning. Maybe *the* beginning for many of us and because we can use it as a measure of how the transformation we require is progressing.

The new social history's importance to our topic is, I think, that it authorized us as individuals—as women, as people of color, as people of minority ethnic groups—to write history, and it authorized us as people about whom history could be written. But, having done that, it could do little more. This is not the place to analyze the "new social history" paradigm itself, so let me simply point to just a few ways the history of race, ethnicity, gender—and even class—could not be contained within it. First, an observation about demographics: the leading practitioners of the new social history, for all their interest in and concern for the poor, the nameless, the ordinary, or the female, were elite white males. Most were willing, even eager, to open up the profession, but they were not particularly willing to

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see changes beyond those which they had themselves fostered. And while they were willing to share power, they were not willing to cede it. Their gates were wider than most, but they were, nonetheless, gatekeepers.

This leads me to my second point, one about theory and method. At the analytic center of the new social history —at the heart of its power to describe, categorize, and map change—was class. The tendency of social historians was, therefore, to reduce all systems of social hierarchy to class and all categories of difference to class—including race, ethnicity, and gender. "Class," moreover, was considered by and large a socioeconomic category, and even in the hands of someone like E. P. Thompson, who made it a sociocultural category, class remained something defined by men, usually through their relationships to work in the market economy.[2] Hence, invariably if often subtly, the categories of race, ethnicity and gender got reduced to contingent categories—and ones that were implicitly or explicitly analytically conflated. As products of the same dynamic, they were the same thing: it was even seriously proposed by serious social historians that the patriarchal relations that bound woman to man were analogous to the ties of the working class to the bourgeoisie; that racism was a form of wage exploitation; that women and blacks in the United States stood in comparable relations to white males. This kind of analysis (although caricatured here) left so much out, reduced so much to trivia, that it is no wonder those of us in Women's Studies or African-American Studies refused the alliance being assumed.

Hence, while the new social history produced a lot of good work about the history of women and people of color, social history could not contain these subjects. Women's history, if I may concentrate on the field I know best, headed off into several other, eventually quite productive areas, all of them outside history. Because these explora-

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tions were nurtured in self-consciously interdisciplinary spaces, often in women's studies programs themselves, and were fueled by feminism's insistence that gender was a system of power relations (not simply the social organization of biological differences), the explorations were extraordinarily wide ranging and ambitious. Psychology, especially psychoanalytic theory, anthropology, political theory, and various forms of poststructural literary theory have all been on the plates of women's historians in the last two decades—not on theirs alone of course, but I would venture on theirs with special effect. As a result, women's history has moved a long distance from conventional social history, and has drawn closer to something called cultural studies, where it meets other scholars—some of them historians and some not—whose primary interests are in social difference.[3]

Here the emphasis is not on causal explanation per se but on systems of meaning and how they are constructed. In this body of scholarship, gender and, not incidentally, race and ethnicity, are analyzed as constructions—as arbitrary and historically constituted categories. Sometimes labeled "poststructuralist" or "history after the linguistic turn," this kind of history-writing owes much to modern theories of language, subjectivity, and identity. And it calls into question many venerable assumptions of history-writing—the ideas of progress; of linear stories; of links between cause, intention, and outcome; of historical truth. But it does not do what some of its resistant critics say it does. It does not undermine the notion that we can know something useful about our past; it does not write human actors out of history; it does not deny, trivialize, or obliterate the categories of woman/man, black/white, center/margin. It simply investigates how these categories are created and how they acquire meaning.

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It is in the interdisciplinary spaces where this kind of scholarship is practiced, I think, where gender, ethnicity, race, and even class can find the possibility of a history of their own, a history that is not in some sense derivative. It is not a place where we will find new metatheories capable of "explaining" gender, race, or class in any useful way. It is not, therefore, a place that can long be controlled by a single theorist or school—despite the current fascination with a few theorists who have helped us get there, such as Foucault, Derrida, Lacan, Habermas.[4] [The fact that I can lump together such disparate names speaks volumes about the heterogeneity, the ultimate uncontrollability of this space.] It is a space where quite an assortment of people have gathered . . . Hazel Carby, Mary Ryan, Homi Bhabha, Judith Walkowitz, Joan Scott, Cornel West, bell hooks, Gayatri Spivak, Lata Mani, to name a few.[5] There has been and there will continue to be enormous resistance to the challenges being posed to traditional history from these spaces. Our critics will continue to try to marginalize what we do as "not history," as "mere politics," as unrigorous, interdisciplinary, "soft." Such charges have allowed them to put us in ghettoized jobs or, worse, to ignore us—sometimes with smug good will, sometimes with evident ill will. I prefer the ill will, because it reveals so clearly what is really at stake: it is no longer just a question of whose history gets written and who writes it. It is a question of how history is written and who controls the terms of the discourse. I think we are at a moment where, in fact, historical studies of gender, race, and ethnicity are in a position truly to threaten traditional history-writing because we are so deeply involved in interdisciplinary projects where productive work on social and cultural theory of use to all of us is going on.

I do not know quite what our history-writing will look like if we continue in this direction. But I do know we

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will not easily be able to reform our discipline from the center out, that only from such experimentation and only through such alliances with others are we going to escape the tokenization our critics try to impose and the marginalization they wish to achieve. If we are ever to transform our own disciplines; more modestly, if we are ever to prosper in our own enterprises; most modestly, if we are able to survive in the academy and reproduce ourselves at all, it will be because we successfully wage guerrilla warfare from collaborative, constantly shifting, interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary sites. Not because those at the center are going to help us unseat them. The best we can hope for is that they are compelled to grant us admittance, however threatening our presence, however disruptive our histories, however disreputable our friends.

Notes

1. The works of Lawrence Stone include *Social Change and Revolution in England, 1540–1640* (London: Longmans, 1965); *The Past and the Present Revisited* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987); *An Open Elite?: England, 1540–1880* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984); *The Family Sex and Marriage in England 1500–1800* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1977); *Family and Fortune: Studies in Aristocratic Finance in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973); *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558–1641* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967); *The Causes of the English Revolution, 1529–1642* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972).

Those of George Rudé include *Robespierre: Portrait of a Revolutionary Democrat* (New York: Viking Press, 1976); *Revolutionary Europe* (Cleveland: Meridian

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For Philippe Ariès, see *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, translated from the French by Robert Baldick (New York: Vintage Books, 1962); *Essais sur l'histoire de la mort en Occident du Moyen-Age à nos jours* (Paris: Seuil, 1975); *Histoire de la vie privée*, eds. Philippe Ariès et Georges Duby (Paris: Seuil, 1985); *L'homme devant la mort* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1977).

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Puerto Rican Women's Historiography and the Inclusive Curriculum

Altagracia Ortiz

For the last two decades scholars in Puerto Rico have made a tremendous effort to recover the history of *Puertorriqueñas*, especially working-class Puerto Rican women. The works of Isabel Picó, Yamila Azize, Blanca Silvestrini, Lydia Milagros Gonzalez, Maria del Carmen Baerga, Marcia Rivera Quintero, and Nilsa Burgos are excellent examples of this endeavor.[1] Both Picó and Azize have concentrated for the most part on the struggles of Puerto Rican women workers in the first twenty years of this century and on analyses of the divergent class trends in the feminist movement in Puerto Rico. More recently Picó has examined the representation of women in the mass media and in education, while Azize has documented the lives of women in the medical and social services professions. Silvestrini, Gonzalez, and Baerga, in the meantime, have provided us with insights into the labor force participation of Puerto Rican needle workers during the Great Depression. And the works of Rivera Quintero and Nilsa Burgos give a panorama of the incorporation of women into the Puerto Rican economy. All these works are abundantly illustrated with a historical insight that places women at the center of the United States colonial economic matrix on the island.

Other historians who have examined the lives and times of women in Puerto Rico are Jalil Sued Badillo in his 1975 *La mujer indigena y su sociedad (The Indigenous*

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Woman and Her Society) and Olga Jimenez de Wagenheim in her study of Puerto Rican women in the nineteenth century. A number of biographies—especially Norma Valle Ferrer's *Luisa Capetillo: historia de una muier proscrita (Luisa Capetillo: A History of an Exiled Woman)* and Yvette Jimenez de Baez's *Julia de Burgos, vida y poesia (Julia de Burgos, Life and Poetry)*—also have contributed to the history of Puerto Rican women in Puerto Rico. Luisa Capetillo is considered by many women as the mother of the feminist movement in Puerto Rico. She was a turn-of-the century Marxist labor organizer and mother of four who never married because she believed that the institution of marriage enslaved women. Burgos was a poet and teacher who had achieved renown in Puerto Rico before she came to this country in the early 1940s, but was forced to work in garment factories because she could not earn a living in her profession. She died of alcoholism in East Harlem in 1953.

These historical works have expanded the horizons of the disciplines of history in Puerto Rico and of Puerto Rican studies in the states. Conscientious feminist scholars on the island have incorporated these works into their courses, as is evidenced by the recent curricular activity of the *Pro-Mujer (Pro-Woman)* Center at the University of Cayey, a regional campus of the University of Puerto Rico, under the leadership of Azize. Using a Ford Foundation grant, Azize organized a conference on the integration of gender, race, class, and ethnicity into undergraduate curricula in universities and colleges throughout the island. Her publication, *Hacia un curriculo no sexista (Toward a Nonsexist Curriculum)*, a summary of the conference proceedings, includes examples of how teachers in Puerto Rico are successfully transforming the curriculum to reflect the new trends in academia.

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Although there is no question that this new scholarship enriched the way that history is perceived and taught (at least by some) in Puerto Rico, few of these historical works take into consideration racial dimensions on the island. For example, there are presently no published studies that take into account the contributions of Afro-Puerto Rican women to the history of labor in Puerto Rico. Palmira Rios, a scholar at the New School for Social Research, has begun to explore this problem in the feminist literature in Puerto Rico, but her analysis is sociological rather than historical. Another area that has been neglected is the unpaid domestic work of women. So far we only have the studies of Maria del Carmen Baerga (a sociologist) and Carmen Perez Herranz (an anthropologist), both of whom have done comparative studies of women's wage and non-wage labor in Puerto Rico. Women's labor studies on the island also have ignored the ethnic diversity that is emerging on the island as a result of the influx of white European Americans, Cubans, Arabs, Jordanians, Haitians, Dominicans, and Central Americans; but the work of Laura Ortiz Negron on Dominican migration into Puerto Rico has begun to note some of the more salient aspects of this labor movement. Puerto Rican women's labor historians also have not taken age into consideration in their analyses. In connection with this, the anthropological work of Helen Icken Safa on age differences among Puerto Rican women workers in a garment factory in Puerto Rico has much to teach us. She found that employers in this garment factory preferred to hire young women because older women were more demanding and less fearful of management. These are a few of the themes or factors that need to be explored further by historians of Puerto Rican women's labor on the island.

Now what about Puerto Rican women workers in the states? Puerto Rican women have been part of the mainland labor force for almost one hundred years now,

but their history has yet to be written. Teresa L. Amott and Julie E. Mattaei's "Yo misma fui mi ruta" ("I Was My Own Path") in *Race, Gender, and Work: A Multicultural Economic History of Women in the United States*, published in 1991, is a good start but is far too sketchy. Early research on Puerto Rican pioneering migrant women workers can be found in Virginia Sanchez Korrol's doctoral dissertation, which was published in 1983. She also has written some vignettes of Puerto Rican professional workers. The focus of these vignettes, however, is on the contributions that these women have made to the Puerto Rican community rather than on an analysis of the nature and problems of their integration into the North American professional labor market. In connection with Puerto Rican women's labor force participation patterns, we should note here the social science research of Rosemary Santana Cooney, Alice Colon, and Janis Barry Figueroa, who have provided historians with much empirical insight into the decline of the labor force participation of *Puertorriqueñas* in the Middle Atlantic region.

Even though comparative historical studies on Puerto Rican women workers both in Puerto Rico and in the United States are few, there are numerous scholars from a variety of disciplines, who, using different methodologies, are constructing and reconstructing the lives of working *Puertorriqueñas* on the island and in the mainland. The bibliographic compendium, a computerized database by Edna Acosta-Belén *et al.*, is a testimony to their work. This database is housed at the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at SUNY, Albany.

I am editing an anthology, tentatively titled: *Gender, Labor, and Colonialism: Puerto Rican Women Workers in the Twentieth Century*, which explores the relationship of the work history of *Puertorriqueñas* to United States colonial politics and economic development on the island and

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to Puerto Rican labor migration patterns during the twentieth century. This historical anthology will contain eight essays that gather the latest research on Puerto Rican women workers here and in Puerto Rico.

The first essay, by Eileen Boris, analyzes the problems of home needle workers on the island during the 1930s and their reaction to United States congressional attempts to regulate this industry through the National Recovery Act of 1935. In the second essay, which I hope will serve as a "bridge" between workers on the island and the mainland, I trace the history of home needle workers and factory garment workers from Puerto Rico to New York City from 1920 to 1980. This essay is followed by Sanchez Korrol's account of Puerto Rican teachers in the city's public schools from 1950 to 1960 in an effort to understand the diverse nature of the Puerto Rican migration to the United States. The anthology then turns to Alice Colon's investigations on the decline of the labor force participation of Puerto Rican women workers in the mid-Atlantic region during the 1960s and 1970s, and the implications of this phenomenon for the increasing number of female-headed households and poverty in the Puerto Rican community.

With the essays by Carmen Perez Herranz and Geraldine Casey on garment and clerical workers respectively, we return to the island once again to examine the impact of late twentieth-century labor market transformations on women's lives and the workplace. The anthology concludes with two essays: one by Maria Munoz Vazquez that documents Puerto Rican women's recent struggles to create safe environments in the textile and chemical industries in Puerto Rico; another by Rosa Torruellas and Rina Benmayor that attempts to redefine work and productive labor by studying the lives of women who have been mar-

ginalized by the decline in the manufacturing sectors in the metropolitan area of New York City. By organizing these essays chronologically, rather than geographically, I hope to show the continuity and parallelism of Puerto Rican women's work experience on the island and in the United States. I also hope to show how the history of Puerto Rican women workers is now a recurring phenomenon in industrially developing countries through the world, and the implications of this for women in the twenty-first century.

I now want to address the issue of the research on Puerto Rican women and the discipline of history in this country. We have been asked to consider a very important question: Are the questions that the discipline raises the same as they were two decades ago? But, to answer it adequately I would have to go back to my definition of discipline as I have defined it in this presentation. So the question, for me, would be: Are the questions that the discipline of labor history raises the same as they were two decades ago? In Puerto Rico, the answer would be no. Scholars, mainly women, have charted new paths in the understanding of labor in Puerto Rico by incorporating women's work experiences and by asking such questions as: what roles have women played or occupied in Puerto Rico's colonial economy; how have women's participation transformed the workplace in Puerto Rico in the twentieth century? In the United States, I would tend to think the answer is yes, because few labor histories have bothered to integrate the Puerto Rican experience into their analyses. Even in the area where Puerto Rican women made their greatest contribution in the twentieth century, in the needlework industry, they are almost totally ignored. An example of this is Joan M. Jensen and Sue Davidson's anthology *A Needle, A Bobbin, A Strike: Women Needleworkers in America*, published in 1984, which included selections that note the contributions of numerous white

ethnic women, but failed to recognize the critical presence of Puerto Rican women in the 1950s and 1960s—a presence that resulted in the halting of the spiraling decline of this industry in New York City during these years. From the research that I am now doing on labor histories—and this has included the works of Philip Foner, Alice Kessler Harris, Ruth Milkman, and Barbara M. Wertheimer among others—Puerto Rican women are still invisible, although white women are not just visible, they are portrayed as active participants in the construction of America's labor history.

It is also true that very little of the research on Puerto Rican women workers has been integrated into the discipline of American history. I think American historians have responded better to the research on African-American women, but they have tended to neglect the contributions of the Puerto Rican people as well as those of other Hispanics.

I think that the incorporation of the work experiences of Puerto Rican women into American history books and courses is still marginal for several reasons. Inclusion, I believe, responds to power. African Americans are included in the curriculum because they are seen by white scholars and academicians as having clout. Hispanics, and particularly Puerto Ricans, are seen as unimportant because we lack political and academic power.

We also lack the scholarship. The Puerto Rican community is a poor, working-class community, and when a few of us happen to make it into college, we get co-opted by social work schools, law schools, and bilingual programs. Few of us go into graduate school and fewer of us go into history. In the metropolitan area, there are only a handful of Puerto Rican historians, and I know of only three historians who work on Puerto Rican women. Olga

Jimenez de Wagenheim, Sanchez Korrol and myself. Consequently, there is very little research on Puerto Rican labor history. Most non-Puerto Rican history students have been made to feel that unless you are Puerto Rican you cannot write about the Puerto Rican experience; hence, they do not approach the Puerto Rican community as a viable area of research for fear that their work will be rejected by us and by others. Clearly, even though we have begun to weave and spin out a grand history, we need many more weavers in order to create this delicate but magnificent fabric called Puerto Rican women's labor history. We need this research in order to make a reality of the Albany and CUNY Board of Higher Education mandates to diversify the curriculum and make it more multicultural. Perhaps this will result in the incorporation of the experiences of Puerto Rican women into American history courses and texts.

Note

1. The author will be happy to provide further references to anyone who wishes to pursue this topic. Please contact her c/o History Department, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, New York, NY 10019.

American Social History

Myra B. Young Armstead

From where I sit as a social historian of the American experience, the focus of this evening's seminar—an assessment of the impact of the study of gender, race, ethnicity, and class on the discipline of history—provides an entry to a potentially endless discussion concerning the impact of "social history" (twenty years ago called the "new social history") on the field, for as Peter Stearns has noted, social history may be defined as a "set of topics" or a "collection of special subjects" with gender, race, ethnicity, and class among the most central or at least readily cited.[1] The prisms on the past provided by these categories of analysis, all of them either blatantly overlooked or badly misperceived by the earlier Progressive and Consensual schools, have directly challenged conventional historical wisdom and augmented our knowledge of the past.

The Progressive historians acknowledged conflict in America's past, the consensus historians denied any, but both assumed the relentless inclusive quality of American liberal democracy. In their enthusiasm for the collective success story, both neglected to note or highlight the depth of the persistent deprivations of women and people of color. In their assumptions of assimilation and mobility, they easily side-stepped evidence of American xenophobia and resistance to mainstream, middle-class culture by workers and immigrants. In a sharply revisionist stance, pioneering social historians, reflecting their grounding in the radical political currents of the 1960s, called for a history "from the bottom up;" this in fact necessitated new and head-long considerations of gender, race, ethnicity, and class as historical variables.[2]

A cursory examination of the findings of a few exemplary pieces of scholarship of the past twenty years dealing with these variables suggests how drastically our understanding of American history has altered. We can no longer picture industrial work as an exclusively male preserve. Industrialization, arguably the single most catalytic historical development in nineteenth-century America, would not have been possible without the cheap and available labor of women. Textile production led industrialization, and Thomas Dublin's work on antebellum factory life in Lowell, Massachusetts underscored how the first fully-integrated, mass-oriented assembly process in textile manufacture was realized only through the exploitation of female labor. The subsequent research of Leslie Tentler and Mary Blewett, for example, continued this model in pointing out the persistent reliance on a peripheralized, segmented female labor pool in many areas of American industry. The republican ideology of the early national period cannot be seen as an entirely liberating force in its valuation of the independent worker thanks to the work of Christine Stansell. As dependent beings, the status of women was depressed by such thought. On the other hand, Linda Kerber and Mary Beth Norton have shown that women were not entirely omitted in the new republican formulation. Motherhood would provide white, educated women with a special role in shaping moral, male citizens for the new polity.[3]

Our thinking of America's racial history has undergone equally dramatic transformation. Slavery, for example, is no longer understood as an institution wholly owned and molded by white masters. The rich slave historiography of the 1970s placed the spotlight on the slaves themselves for the first time to reveal a vibrant, creative alternative African-American culture. Eugene Genovese's monograph on the subject aptly subtitled *The World the Slaves*

Made, placed slaves and masters in a subtle dialectic whereby slaves exploited the contradictions of a system that defined them, human beings, as mere extensions of the masters' will to forge a separate psychological and social space for themselves. Genovese, Lawrence Levine, and John Blassingame have all described this space in new terms including religion, humor, family, work, and politics.[4]

The paradigm of the immigrant experience as presented in Oscar Handlin's *The Uprooted* has similarly disappeared from our now culturally pluralistic conceptualizations of ethnicity as a factor in American history. No longer do we posit a "melting pot" theory whereby either through intermarriage or Americanization, ethnic differences vanish; we do not assume that immigrants arriving in the United States were culturally barren and destitute; finally we do not believe that the experience of the second generation was altogether wrenching as it labored to shake off and rise above the deprivations of its ancestors while breaking into the mainstream. The scholarship of Kathleen Neils Conzen, Virginia Yans-McLaughlin, Josef Barton, and Virginia Sanchez-Korrol concerning Germans, Italians, Slovaks and Puerto Ricans, respectively and cumulatively has demonstrated that immigrants were typically a self-selected group of ambitious, resourceful individuals who created and relied on resilient family, neighborhood, and community networks and institutions to ease the process of adapting to their new environment. Moreover, many of these community ties have not disappeared but persist even into the present.[5]

The issue of class in American history in many ways still centers on the same question "Why no socialism in America?" But the answers labor historians now seek no longer assume a unifying liberal ideology, nor do they re-

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quire a charting of the trade union movement and its leaders. A whole generation of labor historians, influenced by British historian E. P. Thompson, have argued instead for answers that lie in an investigation of an alternative working class culture—"traditions, value systems, ideas, and institutional forms." Herbert Gutman and others—Alan Dawley, Paul Faler, and Bruce Laurie, for example—with lens trained on evangelical religion, leisure habits, craft traditions, and peasant folk songs all revealed compelling evidence for a worker subculture by which a separate class was formed.[6]

In short, an entire set of substantive shifts in the interpretation of American history has resulted from the centrality now afforded gender, race, ethnicity, and class as fundamental categories shaping human experience. But the influence of these variables on the discipline of history has not been limited to content. They have also affected historiography, the actual practice and teaching of the discipline. Formerly "inarticulate" women, racial and ethnic minorities, and workers have been given voice by a reculling of traditional sources and by the reliance on "new" sources. Traditional sources like plantation records and inventories, for example, were used by Herbert Gutman in his study of the black family to uncover patterns in naming practices among slaves, a key finding supporting his conclusion of generational continuity, strength, and stability even in the vulnerable slave family unit. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich examined probate records and tax ledgers of colonial New England to construct a picture of the material life and household technology of housewives during that period.[7] "Newer" sources included census manuscripts and city directories that are especially helpful in the study of large, urban populations of women, minorities, immigrants, and workers. Information regarding "culture" is now sought in songs, folk tales, games, and rituals. And in all cases, there

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is a privileging of the "documents" most resonant of the subject's own voice whether in older, long-known literary sources—for example, journals, diaries, slave narratives, women's/ethnic/race/labor periodicals and newspapers—or in newer, twentieth century, visual and oral records—for example, black-directed and produced films and histories constructed from researcher-directed interviews with subjects.

These techniques, many of them borrowed from other social sciences—chiefly psychology, anthropology, and sociology—have given the field of history an interdisciplinary tinge, and even encouraged social scientists from these areas to reciprocate by venturing into the field of history. If James Axtell's history of European-Native American encounters during the colonial period is heavily anthropological, then Anthony Wallace's anthropological study of a nineteenth-century Pennsylvania industrial community is certainly an historical account. Likewise, if Daniel Walkowitz' historical study of industrial workers in nineteenth-century Cohoes and Troy has a sociological feel in its quantification of ethnic and age cohort occupational patterns, then social anthropologist Louise Lamphere's long study of working women in Central Falls, Rhode Island is easily considered social history.[8]

Ironically, the stratification of history into gender, racial, ethnic, and class layers, can result in a strange "ghettoization" within the profession. When historians of gender communicate only with their colleagues who study women in America, when African Americanists only converse with other historians of the black experience, when immigration historians refine only each other's conceptualizations, and labor historians inform only the insights of their peers engaged in an historical explanation of class, the collective historical project suffers. The "many pasts" so proudly proclaimed in the early 1970s fail in fact to offer a fuller,

more complete understanding of America but rather combine to offer a fragmented, piecemeal, contributory picture of the national narrative. Gary Nash's *Race, Class and Politics in American History*, admittedly a series of essays, is an example of this. In reading this collection, one wonders if America's story is so "disunited," to use Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.'s phrase, that no synthesis at all is possible.[9]

What is needed and what in fact has already begun is a kind of cross-fertilization of historical conceptions across categories and with regard to the older, "big" issues in American history. Examples of this type abound. Class and race considerations now pervade treatments of women's history. Thus a work like Nancy Cott's *Bonds of Womanhood*, a 1977 articulation of antebellum prescriptions regarding middle-class white women's domestic sphere was followed by Suzanne Lebsock's *Free Women of Petersburg* (1984), a summary of the status, chiefly in legal terms, of antebellum women—black and white, working and middle-class. Gender based portrayals of racial and ethnic history similarly are growing concerns. Deborah Gray White's 1985 account of the female slave experience, by considering both race and gender, is richer than John Blassingame's 1972 male-focused sketch of antebellum black life. And Hasia Diner offers a female-centered study of Irish migration, thus combining gender and ethnic perspectives. The race/class nexus is explored in Joe Trotter's study of Milwaukee's black working class. And John Bodnar and company offer a fine interpretation of working class history in Pittsburgh that places racial and ethnic dynamics in comparative perspective.[10]

The acceptance of gender, race, ethnic, and class awareness among historians has also affected the treatment of the established and so-called "large" questions in American history. The meaning of citizenship, the limits of po-

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litical participation as conceived in the Revolution and Constitution—long a subject among Americanists—was approached by Edmund Morgan in his study of colonial Virginia. In this monograph, he directly confronts the obvious contradiction between the Constitution's stated, lofty democratic ideals and its toleration of the institution of slavery. The seeming paradox is "resolved" according to Morgan by the grounding of republican principles in property rights for white men after first Native Americans, and then Africans, were demeaned and stereotyped as naturally idle, inferior, and servile. Seen in this light, slavery buttressed but did not challenge republican notions held by the nation's founders. In a similar holistic vein, Nancy Limerick's treatment of the American frontier is not a Turnerian grand story of promise and triumph. By including women and Native Americans, Limerick underscores that the "victories," presumptuously projected upon the entire nation by earlier interpreters, were won at a price. That price included the losses suffered by these other Americans.[11]

So far, my assessment has assumed gender, race, ethnicity, and class to be essential and fundamental categories of historical analysis. It should be noted, however, that in a recent historiographical turn, these very categories are being challenged. No doubt influenced by the post-structural, deconstructionist thought pervading the academy at the present juncture, some historians preoccupied with these variables have embarked on a voyage of self-reflection and self-correction in which they question the extent to which they have participated in the reification of the very categories that have oppressed the sectors of American society they have sought to liberate. Gender historians, affected by feminist literary criticism and anthropological theory, lead the way here. I point to, for example, Linda Kerber's article in which she criticizes the universal acceptance of the notion of separate sphere; she argues

that the term, while used by historical subjects, was merely a trope to describe and yet mask unequal power relations; power, not spheres, should be the concern of historians, she asserts. Regarding race, Barbara Field posits that race is essentially a social construction with no scientific material basis, that historians like Winthrop Jordan who search for evidence of incipient racism in Elizabethan England's contact with "non Christian," "black-skinned" Africans engage in a deceptive presentism. Sociologists and anthropologists of the ethnic experience now argue for the "invention of tradition." And Mari Jo and Paul Buhle claim that by searching for evidence of "individualism" in nineteenth-century workers, some labor historians privilege a concept that in its construction excluded all except white males.[12]

While the upshot of these trends is unknown and may in fact prove fruitful, I would remind my colleagues that the social categories and language used by those human beings who lived in this country's past, however deemed "superficial" by contemporary theoretical calculations, had meaning in the past. And to the extent that they affected the historical record, it is our duty as chroniclers of the past to employ them, since history at its best constructs not merely the patterns of the past but the worlds of the past—in the past's own terms. Finally, despite the massive transformations in the discipline that have accompanied the injection of considerations of gender, race, ethnicity, and class, history remains the art of informed storytelling. Despite increasing sophistication regarding discursive terms and modes, the heuristic nature of our craft persists. Sometimes the more things change, the more they remain the same. Deconstructionists and their detractors in the profession find common ground, for whether dwelling on the obvious categories or on their construction, there remains "the inaccessibility of the past except 'as story.'" In

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this respect, the renewed emphasis on the narrative mode within the profession is both comforting and sensible.

Notes

1. Peter N. Stearns, "The New Social History: An Overview" in James B. Gardner, George Rollie Adams, and others, *Ordinary People and Everyday Life: Perspectives on the New Social History* (Nashville: The American Association for State and Local History, 1983), 4, 5, 14; see also Mari Jo Buhle and Paul Buhle, "The New Labor History at the Cultural Crossroads," *Journal of American History* 75:1 (June 1988), 155.

2. Jesse Lemisch, "The American Revolution Seen from the Bottom Up," in Barton J. Bernstein, ed., *Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968), 3–45.

3. See Thomas Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826–1860* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970); Leslie Woodcock Tentler, *Wage Earning Women: Industrial Work and Family Life in the United States, 1900–1930* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979); Mary H. Blewett, "The Sexual Division of Labor and the Artisan Tradition in Early Industrial Capitalism: The Case of New England Shoemaking, 1780–1860," in Carol Groneman and Mary Beth Norton, eds., *To Toil the Live Long Day: America's Women at Work, 1780–1980* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987); Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789–1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987); Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: Univer-

sity of North Carolina Press, 1980); Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750–1800* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980).

4. Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976); Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought From Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); John Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972).

5. Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People*, 2d ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973); Kathleen Neils Conzen, *Immigrant Milwaukee, 1836–60* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Virginia Yans-McLaughlin, *Family and Community: Italian Immigrants in Buffalo, 1880–1930* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977); Josef J. Barton, *Peasants and Strangers: Italians, Rumanians, and Slovaks in an American City, 1890–1950* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975); Virginia Sanchez-Korrol, *From Colonial to Community: The History of Puerto Rican Migration in New York City, 1917–1948* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983).

6. Examples of the old labor history focusing on union movements and leaders include John R. Commons et al., eds., *A History of Labor in the United States*, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan Company, 1918–1935); Irving Bernstein, *The Lean Years: A History of the American Worker, 1920–33* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960); Edward P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon, 1963); Herbert Gutman,

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"Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America," *American Historical Review* 78 (1973): 531–87; Alan Dawley, *Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976); Paul Faler, "Cultural Aspects of the Industrial Revolution: Lynn, Massachusetts, Shoemakers and Industrial Morality, 1826–1860," *Labor History* 15 (1974): 367–94; Bruce Laurie, *Working People of Philadelphia, 1880–1850* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980).

7. Herbert Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom 1750–1925* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976); Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women of Northern New England, 1650–1750* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982).

8. James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Anthony F. C. Wallace, *Rockdale: The Growth of an American Village in the Early Industrial Revolution* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1972); Daniel J. Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978); Louise Lamphere, *From Working Daughters to Working Mothers: Immigrant Women in a New England Industrial Community* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987).

9. Gary Nash, *Race, Class and Politics in American History: Essays on American Colonial and Revolutionary Society* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986).

10. Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: Woman's Sphere in New England, 1780–1935* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977); Suzanne Lebsock, *The Free Women of Petersburg: Status and Culture in a*

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Southern Town, 1784–1860 (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1985); Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1983); Joe William Trotter, Jr., *Black Milwaukee: The Making of an Industrial Proletariat, 1915–45* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985); John Bodnar, Roger Simon, and Michael P. Weber, *Lives of Their Own: Blacks, Italians, and Poles in Pittsburgh, 1900–1960* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982).

11. Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1975); Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1962); Nancy Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1987).

12. Linda K. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," *The Journal of American History* 75: 1 (June 1988), 9–39; Barbara Fields, "Ideology and Race in American History," in J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson, *Region, Race and Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of C. Vann Woodward* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Buhle and Buhle, "The New Labor History."

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Measuring Impact

Judith P. Zinsser

For the book *History and Feminism: A Glass Half Full*, I proposed to analyze the second wave of feminism's impact on the writing of history and the historical profession in the United States. I began with the most basic question. Just how does one measure "impact?" From the first, I knew that the task required both quantitative and qualitative ways of describing what had and had not happened. With these goals, I decided to look first at definitions of "history." Just how do historians define their subject? Has that changed in the last twenty years as a result of feminism? Is there a women's history and how does it interact with traditional histories? Then I turned to those identified as practitioners, the scholars who define and write history. Can we say that the images and the reality of the historical profession have changed? For example, are there more women historians within the academy today than there were in the late 1960s?

Having formulated my questions and sketched out a methodological approach, I realized that I had another problem. What about the basic concept itself? What about "impact?" What would constitute "impact" in my study? In retrospect, I realize that I went all the way in my definition. Feminism would have been deemed to have had an impact when women's historical experience was valued equally with men and men's experience. This equality within the study of history would, by my definition, have to be complemented by equity for women historians, equity in access to training and employment and in the opportunities to rise within the profession.[1]

Using this approach and these guidelines, there is no doubt that the second wave of feminism, the women's movement initiated in the 1960s, has had an impact that can be measured and quantified. In 1969, Gerda Lerner's article "The New Approaches to the Study of Women in American History" first appeared (in the *Journal of American Social History*) and Berenice A. Carroll petitioned the American Historical Association (AHA) on women's behalf and led in the creation of the women historians' caucus, the CCWHP. Since 1969, as my colleagues on the panel have demonstrated, we have dramatically expanded all definitions of history. We can point with pride to the courses, degree programs, and research centers that have women's history as their focus. By 1990 there were 63 women's Ph.D. and Master's programs in universities and colleges across the country, both public and private.

The 1968-69 guides to historical articles, *Historical Abstracts* and *American History and Life* listed more references to the Australian Air Force and the War of 1912 than women. Today, there are multiple pages of listings specifically on women and innumerable cross-references throughout the volumes. Once historians of women could easily name all the significant works in the field, now they must refer to bibliographies of bibliographies, guides to women's archives and monthly listings of the articles in women's studies and women's history periodicals. The field of women's history has grown exponentially. We have in a little over twenty years created a vast literature about women's experiences in the past and more recently about ways in which gender has affected all of our lives. In a real sense, women's history and women historians have arrived.[2]

But it has grown because of women's efforts. Women founded the first journals like *Feminist Studies* and *Signs*. The same is true for books and for conferences.

The Feminist Press commissioned, published, and reprinted some of the first works of history and literature. The Berkshire Conference of Women Historians sponsored the first national meeting on women's history. Commercial publishers sought out authors and marketed their works not because of encouragement from the male members of the academy, but because women's history and women's studies proved commercially successful. Similar commercial considerations guided choices about textbooks. Feminist advocates for more inclusive history sit on school boards and in state education departments. As a result, most primary, secondary, and collegiate history texts now feature material about women. Even fourth graders in E.D. Hirsch Jr.'s experimental "Cultural Literacy" curriculum hear about women's fight for suffrage.

Despite the efforts of feminists, however, this impact on the writing of history is not the equality that my original definition required. With all of these books, articles, and good intentions the scholarship on women and from the perspective of gender remains marginalized. There has been no integration, no reconceptualization, no alteration of the basic ways of thinking about the past (no "paradigm shift" as described by Thomas Kuhn). Women's history remains a separate Library of Congress listing, never integrated with the national and chronological histories in catalogues or on library shelves. As Elizabeth Minnich explains, "Women's story begins and begins again, and again, and again."[3]

This phenomenon is particularly evident in introductory history courses, in textbooks, and on standardized tests. Charlotte Bunch once described the new curriculum revisions as the "add women and stir" approach. With these courses and with the new textbooks it is more like "add women and don't stir." Professors commonly do

"something" on women, but they do it by interrupting the flow of their narrative rather than presenting material in a new way. They "supplement" the regular readings with a book about women or gender. Even those who write the most popular of these separate women's texts like the authors of *Becoming Visible* bow to the inertia of the profession and use the familiar male chronology and topical divisions in the organization of their information. They explain that the material on women will "fit" more easily that way.

The same lack of integration and reconceptualization characterizes even the most innovative secondary and college texts. Women usually appear in the "social history" sections. Commonly they are part of "population explosions," in which neither they nor men have any active agency. They are described as members of families, as leaders of social reform movements. An extraordinary phenomenon like the European witchcraft persecutions now commonly has its own paragraphs, but they are separate from the main narrative, as if the killings of hundreds of thousands of women in every major kingdom from Finland to Italy, from Russia to England, had no relationship to the other events of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Overall, these women's sections are so placed in the text that students seem to know that this "isn't the stuff that will be on the exam."

Too often women's experiences continue to be subsumed under men's history or fall prey to old denigrating prejudices. United States texts write working-class history as the history of men. Women wage earners are "wives" not union organizers, piece workers and creators of community and family support networks. Similarly, descriptions of immigration talk about the policies against hiring the Irish, "No Irish need apply," and fail to mention that women made up the majority of immigrants and found

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work as domestics. Inadvertently, old stereotypical attitudes survive. In one textbook a "special feature" on Catherine the Great of Russia is entitled, "Catherine Before She Was Great." Imagine the male equivalent, "Alexander Before He Was Great?"

The Educational Testing Service (ETS), the organization responsible for the undergraduate and graduate examinations in history prides itself on the ways in which it has addressed issues of race, gender, and ethnicity throughout its organization. All tests must pass a "sensitivity review." Historians with specialties in a wide range of fields act as consultants. Studies of course offerings, high school programs, and textbooks are made. The fight for the suffrage almost always appears somewhere in the history tests. One year the document questions for the European History Advanced Placement test was on that issue. In the essay section, the social and cultural history questions can sometimes be interpreted so as to use women's material. Thus women's experiences are still separate, marginal, a small piece of the larger topic of history that remains the story of men's lives.

When questioned, historians who have been consultants point to all that has been accomplished. College Board administrators explain that, in fact, ETS plays a "natural role" in this process. The tests merely reflect what the constituency—the colleges and universities—want.

If university departments are the key, what of the colleges and universities, what impact has feminism had on the academy? The picture of women's participation and advancement within the historical profession reveal the same combination of success and marginalization, some impact but not enough to meet the criteria of my original definition. Although the overall number of women earning Ph.D.s in History and of those gaining employment in aca-

demic departments has continued to rise, the number of doctorates and the ranking of employed women remain disproportionately low when compared to male contemporaries. For example, 15.8 percent of the Ph.D.s granted between 1970 and 1974 went to women; in 1980 the equivalent figure was 32.9 percent. But overall in 1990, the number of women receiving doctorates in the humanities was 45.6 percent, indicating that history has not kept pace with the other disciplines.[4] In 1970, 45.6 percent of the total of women with history Ph.D.s held tenured positions, 76 percent of all male academic historians had been awarded tenure. The percentage for women had risen only slightly by the end of the 1980s, 12.1 percent of the men had risen to full professor, while only 2.9 percent of the women had done so. Clearly in the twenty years of feminist activism women had won training and access but not equity.

Feminists have speculated on women's disadvantaged record of advancement. They point to the basic framework that continues to reflect traditional images of historian's life. Feminists have, as Gerda Lerner once explained, made "a space for a new generation of women," but they still function in hierarchical academic institutions defined by traditional men's values and needs.[5]

Mary Catherine Bateson summarized her experience at Amherst the "habit of hiring women and then dealing with them in such a way that when the time came for promotion it would be reasonable to deny it."[6] A rise in rank within the academy comes with publication. Publication requires time and usually outside funding. Both are hard for women scholars to find and acquire. Women tend to take on extra responsibilities within academic institutions. They are the "token woman" on many committees; they informally counsel women students. They espouse women's causes and work for women's programs. When applying

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for grants, unless they present a traditional history topic, they must contend with the discipline. To many historians in the elite research and funding institutions, women's history is not real "history."

Women's lives tend to be more complex than their male contemporaries, thus compounding the potential disadvantages. If they marry, if they have children, if one partner commutes, women are most often the ones who assume primary responsibility for the household. Not surprisingly, the members of institutional hierarchies have little understanding of this maze of different choices and responsibilities. In theory only "merit" determines who will and who will not receive the rewards of the profession. However, as Jane S. DeHart explained at the AHA breakfast for Women Historians, there is a "gendered ethos of the academy" that subverts the seeming impersonality of the system and belies all claims of equal opportunity. The "model" for the academic life, whether history or another discipline, remains male, not female.

In addition, as with women's history, it is important to remember that the professional positions won, the advances made, have not come easily. Federal legislation and executive orders mandated "affirmative action." Women formed caucuses on every major university and college campus. They instituted individual and class action suits, like Estelle Friedman's at Stanford and the one here at CUNY. Even when rank had been achieved it did not guarantee the same salary as men's. At the end of the 1980s women academic historians earned only 80.6 percent of men's salaries. When protests gained restitution as in the case of the University of Maryland, in a few years the differential had risen again to almost $2,000.

Essentially these statistics are for white women. The situation for women of color is even worse. They suffer

from what Darlene Clark Hine calls "Double Jeopardy." The white academic establishment notices their color, the black male historians their gender. It is that much harder for them to earn a Ph.D. Since 1975 (the first year of representative data) the numbers of minority women and men seeking the doctorate in history has gone up and down. The average total for all people of color remains at just under 10 percent with African Americans the most numerous, constituting 1.6 percent of the total number of history Ph.D.s in 1975 and 3.6 percent in 1990. Women have never been the majority of recipients.[7]

Having achieved the doctorate, advancement has posed other problems for women of color. The demands on their time, as the only women, or the only person of color, make finding opportunities for research and writing difficult. White feminist historians have meant to give support, but have not fully appreciated the differences that race has made. An offer, as Elizabeth V. Spelman describes it, to welcome "someone into one's own home doesn't represent an attempt to undermine privilege; it expresses it."[8] A dramatic demonstration of these disparities and inequalities emerged in a 1981-82 study of grants to historians; on average men received $18,933; women, $2,984; minority men $565; minority women $1.22.[9]

For those women who have succeeded, overcome all of the difficulties and hazards, the "victory" has proved a mixed blessing. As Gay L. Gullickson had explained in *Social Science History*: "From my perspective, women's historians are like unexpected and uninvited guests. We have arrived, but we have been left to fend for ourselves, unfeted, and unwelcomed" (Winter 1984). Women practitioners, like their history, are marginalized.

Even more significantly, the "burden of proof," the case for the equitable inclusion of women and for equal

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treatment in our histories still lies with those who want to change, not with those who have opposed it. For this whole story is about power, the power to determine how history shall be studied and written, the power to determine which historians will be validated and rewarded. As a result, all aspects of the endeavor are by definition "political." For women and for men there is no "neutral" place to stand, no "neutral" position to take.

In the past women's gender was significant. It made their history unimportant. As professionals they had to differentiate themselves from popular images of the "silly," emotional, and thus, unscholarly female, sure to marry, have children and drop out. In response women historians created their own definitions of success and professionalism and ignored male colleagues who negated their competence, who made flirtatious or derogatory remarks.

Today the fact of being a woman is equally significant in different ways. Feminists have with their methodological discussions challenged and seemingly brought confusion to the old priorities, to the traditional sureties of history. The fact of gender and the consciousness of past wrongs can complicate the simplest interactions between colleagues and call into question the old networks and unspoken shared understandings of the male historians' world. A mocking paternalism has been replaced by outraged defensiveness.

The continuing cost to women's history and to women historians of such negative attitudes is real. Some feminists believe that it takes all of their energy just to stay in the same place.[10] Despite measurable quantitative change, feminists have not had the qualitative impact they hoped for. Marginalization of women's history means that we have not altered the basic canons of the discipline. Nor have we gained broad acceptance of gender as a category

of analysis. Marginalization means that we have not made the professional advancement of women within the academy a matter of course rather than a matter of note. Instead, caricatures of feminists appear throughout media. Protests against "quotas" and claims of "reverse discrimination" fill columns of professional and popular journals and newspapers.[11]

Feminists now realize that it is not just a question of being included. At its worst this has led to competition between women, and between white women and women and men of color for employment, recognition and advancement. The "through-going meltdown" of society's institutions called for by Linda Gordon in an early 1980s interview for *Radical History* may not be necessary, but the old system is more intact than not. The interplay between writing of women's history and the politics of being a woman historian continues and will continue until there is recognition within the academy of the disparity between its ideals and its realties. Colleagues like to present an image of their college or university as an open world governed by principles of equality, neutrality, and merit. In fact far too many remain limited, intellectual enclaves skewed to hierarchy, difference, and privilege. For feminists committed to the reality of a history and a profession defined in terms of equality and equity the era of activism has not passed.

Notes

1. Note that "equal" and "equitable" have different meanings. Access and opportunity on an equitable basis have been required to redress past wrongs and to protect women from the disadvantages stemming from their ac-

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ceptance of the social responsibility for household and children. In this context, "equity" is affirmative action and would lead ultimately to "equality."

2. For more information on the creation of the field of women's history, see chapters 6 and 8 in Judith Zinsser's *History and Feminism: A Glass Half Full* (New York: Twayne/MacMillan, 1992). Note that all quotations, unless otherwise attributed come from this book.

3. Elizabeth Kamarck Minnich, *Transforming Knowledge* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 1.

4. For statistical information and for discussion of the significance of these figures see, Table 2, *AHA Perspectives* 29 (9) (December 1991), 10; Joan Hoff-Wilson, "Women Historians in the United States," *CCWHP Newsletter* 21 (4) (September/October 1990), 27-29; chapter 5 of Zinsser, *History and Feminism*.

5. Gerda Lerner, 1978 interview, Columbia Oral History Collection.

6. Catherine Bateson, *Composing a Life* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 54.

7. These statistics are from Table 3, *AHA Perspectives* 29:9 (December 1991): 11; see also chaps. 5 and 6 in Zinsser, *History and Feminism*.

8. Elizabeth V. Spelman, *The Inessential Woman* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1988) 165-66, 164; See also Elsa Barkley Brown, "African American Women's Quilting: A Framework for Conceptualizing and Teaching African American Women's History" *Signs* 14:4 (Summer 1989).

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9. *Survey of Historical Profession: Academia 1981-82 Summary Report* (Washington D.C.: American Historical Association) Table 4, 15.

10. On the "insidious ways" in which marginality affects women and their work see Penina Migdal Glazer and Miriam Slater, *Unequal Colleagues: The Entrance of Women into the Professions 1890-1940* (New Brunswick; Rutgers University Press), 244.

11. See, for example, the recent interchange on and protests against any suggestion of formal "gender balancing" of panels at meetings of the American Historical Association. *AHA Perspectives* 30:4 (April 1992), 13-16. As Elizabeth Minnich has explained, male academics use new language of compensation to defend the old hegemonies. On the one hand, they can claim the traditional, insist on the university of "man," on the neutrality and the disinterested assessment of their own merit. When challenged to create "tiny pockets of consideration" to right old wrongs, they abandon their universalism and rush to describe themselves as entitled to affirmative action, "proclaiming themselves just one group among many." Minnich, *Transforming Knowledge*, 180.

Contributors

Note: These biographical notes were current as of 1992 when these essays were first published.

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Institute for Teaching and Research on Women
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Publications of the National Center for Curriculum Transformation Resources on Women

WOMEN IN THE CURRICULUM

The following publications consist of directories, manuals, and essays covering the primary information needed by educators to transform the curriculum to incorporate the scholarship on women. The publications have been designed to be brief, user friendly, and cross referenced to each other. They can be purchased as a set or as individual titles. Tables of contents and sample passages are available on the National Center Web page: http://www.towson.edu/ncctrw/.

➢ ***Directory of Curriculum Transformation Projects and Activities in the U.S.***

The *Directory* provides brief descriptions of 237 curriculum transformation projects or activities from 1973 to the present. It is intended to help educators review the amount and kinds of work that have been occurring in curriculum transformation on women and encourage them to consult project publications (see also *Catalog of Resources*) and to contact project directors for more information about projects of particular interest and relevance to their needs.

386 pages, 8½ X 11 hardcover, $30 individuals, $45 institutions, ISBN 1-885303-07-6

➢ ***Catalog of Curriculum Transformation Resources***

The *Catalog* lists materials developed by curriculum transformation projects and national organizations that are available either free or for sale. These include proposals, reports, bibliographies, workshop descriptions, reading lists, revised syllabi, classroom materials, participant essays, newsletters, and other products of curriculum transformation activities, especially from those projects listed in the *Directory*. These resources provide valuable information, models, and examples for educators leading and participating in curriculum transformation activities.

(Available fall 1997)

➢ ***Introductory Bibliography for Curriculum Transformation***

The *Introductory Bibliography* provides a list of references for beginning curriculum transformation on women, especially for those organizing projects and activities for faculty and teachers. It does not attempt to be comprehensive but rather to simplify the process of selection by offering an "introduction" that will lead you to other sources.

15 pages, 6 x 9 paper, $7, ISBN 1-885303-32-7

➢ ***Getting Started: Planning Curriculum Transformation***

Planning Curriculum Transformation describes the major stages and components of curriculum transformation projects as they have developed since about 1980. Written by Elaine Hedges, whose long experience in women's studies and curriculum transformation projects informs this synthesis, *Getting Started* is designed to help faculty and administrators initiate, plan, and conduct faculty development and curriculum projects whose purpose is to incorporate the content and perspectives of women's studies and race/ethnic studies scholarship into their courses.

124 pages, 6 x 9 hardcover, $20 individuals, $30 institutions, ISBN 1-885303-06-8

➢ ***Internet Resources on Women: Using Electronic Media in Curriculum Transformation***

This manual gives clear, step-by-step instructions on how to use e-mail, find e-mail addresses, and access e-mail discussion lists relevant to curriculum transformation. It explains Telnet, FTP, Gopher, and the World Wide Web, and how to access and use them. It discusses online information about women on e-mail lists and World Wide Web sites. Written by Joan Korenman, who has accumulated much experience through running the Women's Studies e-mail list, this manual is a unique resource for identifying information for curriculum transformation on the Internet. Updates to this manual will be available on the World Wide Web at http://www.umbc.edu/wmst/updates.html .

130 pages, 6 x 9 hardcover, $20 individuals, $30 institutions, ISBN 1-885303-08-4

➢ ***Funding: Obtaining Money for Curriculum Transformation Projects and Activities***

This manual is intended to assist educators who lack experience in applying for grants but are frequently expected to secure their own funding for projects. The manual provides an overview of the process, basic information and models, and advice from others experienced in fund raising.

150 pages,6 x 9 hardcover, $20 individuals, $30 institutions, ISBN 1-885303-05-x

➢ ***Evaluation: Measuring the Success of Curriculum Transformation***

This manual outlines several designs which could be used when assessing the success of a project. *Evaluation: Measuring the Success of Curriculum Transformation* is written by Beth Vanfossen, whose background in the teaching of research methods as well as practical experience in conducting evaluation research informs the manual's advice. Evaluation is an increasingly important component of curriculum transformation work on which project directors and others often need assistance.

(Available fall 1997)

➢ ***Discipline Analysis Essays***

Under the general editorship of Elaine Hedges, the National Center has requested scholars in selected academic disciplines to write brief essays summarizing the impact of the new scholarship on women on their discipline. These essays identify and explain the issues to be confronted as faculty in these disciplines revise their courses to include the information and perspectives provided by this scholarship. The series is under continuous development, and titles will be added as they become available. See order form for essays currently available.

27 - 60 pages, 6 x 9 paper, $7 each

➢ ***CUNY Panels: Rethinking the Disciplines***

Panels of scholars in seven disciplines address questions about the impact on their disciplines of recent scholarship on gender, race, ethnicity, and class. The panels were developed under the leadership of Dorothy O. Helly as part of the Seminar on Scholarship and the Curriculum: The Study of Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Class within The CUNY Academy for the Humanities and Sciences. For this seminar CUNY received the "Progress in Equity" award for 1997 from the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

56 - 85 pages, 6 x 9 paper, $10 each

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Panels of scholars in seven disciplines address questions about the impact on their disciplines of recent scholarship on gender, race, ethnicity, and class. The panels were developed under the leadership of Dorothy O. Helly as part of the Seminar on Scholarship and the Curriculum within The CUNY Academy for the Humanities and Sciences. This series received the 1997 "Progress in Equity" award from the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

Publications available in WOMEN in the CURRICULUM series

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